

ELEMENTARY CLASSICS.

"WHO is this *Alcestis* who lives at Bradford?" inquired SYLVIA, as she turned over the leaves of my engagement-book. "Is he a nice man?"

"It's BRADFELD," I said, "and it's a woman, not a man. A Greek tragedy, you know."

"Yes," said SYLVIA expectantly, "a woman?"

"And she was married to a man—a king"—(SYLVIA looked pleased)—"who was very ill and didn't want to die—"

"She *must* have been a nice woman!" interposed SYLVIA.

"And the Fates promised to spare his life if someone could be found to take his place and die for him, but no one would, except—"

"Yes," said SYLVIA, "and I *hope* the selfish wretch didn't let her! *How* like a man! Would you let me—"

"Don't interrupt, SYLVIA!" I said severely. "As I was saying, no one could be found to take his place except his faithful wife, *Alcestis*, and so she died."

"Not really?" said SYLVIA, with a startled look.

"Yes, really," I said firmly. "Then on the day of her death another man—"

"Ah!" said SYLVIA.

"Another man," I continued, "came to the house and heard all about it, and he went and fought with Death—"

"How *sweet* of him!" said SYLVIA. "I expect he and *Al-Alcestis* had had some very nice times together before she married that hateful king-man!"

"Not at all!" I said firmly. "In fact it was only for the king's sake—he was his special friend—that *Herakles* fought with Death at all and won back *Alcestis*. And so the king's sorrow was turned into great and unexpected joy!" I concluded.

SYLVIA looked at me witheringly.

"Of course," she said, "the man who wrote the story" ("EURIPIDES was his name, and it was a *play*, not a *story*, SYLVIA!" I murmured) "had to say that *Alcestis* and *Herakles* didn't know each other. I expect everyone knew who he meant—people always *do* guess the real names in novels, don't they?—and it wouldn't have done, but of course she'd thrown over that nice *Herakles* for that hateful king—no, I don't want to know his name—and it was splendid of him to fight with Death for her after she'd been so horrid. That's what men *ought* to be like! Now supposing—"

But here the maid came in to say that the box had come from the dressmaker, and SYLVIA vanished, leaving me to meditate on woman's instinct for understanding the ancients.

Poor old *Herakles*! To think I never saw that before!

AT THE OXFORD ENCŒNIA.

(From Our Own Very Special. Delayed in Transmission.)

It was a most enjoyable time. I write this after breakfast or lunch, I forget which, and am in time to catch the post between dinner and supper. I did catch the post, between the eyes, as I was running to it, and am now suffering from an optical confusion. Only one eye dotted, but you won't mind that: of course you won't, as it's not your eye but mine. Just time to put in some important details.

The Creweian Oration was delivered by a jolly old cock, a very merry fellow who wins the Chanticleerian Prize. Mr. SINGER SARGENT, so-called from the tone of his compositions (you are probably acquainted with the songs of this Singer? if not, you can inquire at any music publishers), being already an R.A., is now distinguished as a D.C.L., a "Doosid Clever Lad." You will be glad to hear that Mr. ANDREW LANG has been appointed D.Litt., meaning Doctor of Letters. It is a Post Office appointment, and belongs to the Insufficiently Stamped and Addressed Department.



"WHAT IS SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE IS SAUCE FOR THE CANDER"; OR, OUT IN THE FORTY-FIVE.

Madame. "WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING, FRANK, TO MAKE YOURSELF SUCH A FRIGHT?"

Frank. "WELL, MY DEAR, YOU SEEM TO HAVE A FANCY FOR DRESSING UP AS YOUR GRANDMAMA, SO I'VE LOOKED OUT SOME OF MY GRANDFATHER'S THINGS, JUST TO BE IN KEEPING."

["Eighteen-forty-five is the *mot d'ordre* for this season's fashions."—*Lady's Paper*.]

Whenever anybody is improperly addressed (whether in the building or in the street), this official has to interfere, and, if necessary, to call a policeman to his assistance. He has also to doctor any letters that are likely to go wrong. Mr. LANG, as you will see, has arduous duties to perform as a P.O. official, but it doesn't matter one penny to a man of his stamp.

I haven't got time for more, as I'm off to a real good Fish Feed at All Soles College. Which meal it is I can't quite say, being still undecided as to what the last one I had was, and then, you see, wherever you pop in your phiz there's champagne. O, it's fine to be an Oxford man! "*Vive l'Amour*" (which is the motto of the Seidlitz-powder Professor of Natural Philosophy, Dr. LOVE)—"*Cigares et cognac!*" Hoorah!" and so forth.

Such lovely gowns as the Dons have! So striking was one of them that, being somewhat shortsighted, I followed it all down the High until I came up with it, and then found inside it a Chancellor, with no Vice about him, or some other gorgeously attired academic official. I was staggered. I apologised. "Reverend and distinguished Sir," said I, "I was only humbly following in your footsteps." He was flattered and appeased. And now to finish the day joyously. I'm running for a Cup. Hooray! Wine and Wenus! It's all Cup and Gown here! * * * *Voici le Proctor!* * * *

Yours ever, TOM QUAD.

OUR LAW-GIVERS.

[Mr. J. REDMOND asked the Prime Minister if he intended to "take any steps to prevent the House from being permanently reduced to impotence" by the blocking motions of "obscure individuals." Mr. BALFOUR replied that it was "impossible to ask one side to correct its way of going on unless there was a clear understanding that the other side would follow a similar process of self-abnegation." He had given no pledge to reform this state of things, but he had promised to remodel the procedure connected with the adjournment for the holidays.]

THEY meet, they cackle, they orate,
They bandy jargon, lip for lip,
With shifty tools of sham debate
They hew each other thigh and hip;
It is *Des mots! des mots! des mots!*
As glorious SARAH says in *Hamlet*,
But for the net results they show
I wouldn't give a paltry damlet.

This side and that Obstruction sits
Alternatively, like a rock,
Breaking the turgid flow of wits
With counter-blasts of "Gag!" and "Block!"
One cries—"The ship of State's at sea,
You bar her way with reefs of granite!"
And gets for instant repartee—
"I know we do, but you began it!"

Big with Napoleonic airs
And beri-beri on the brain,
See REDMOND (J.) conduct affairs
In lofty tones of cool disdain,
Saying, "I ask you, is it just
That individuals should smother
The sacred Truth with obscure dust?"
And Someone answers, "You're Another!"

So the old farce contrives to run,
To what good purpose Heaven knows;
Nothing attempted, nothing done
Earns them an honest night's repose;
Until their power of abstract thought,
Their strenuous will, their fine discernment,
Latent till now at last are brought
To bear upon—the next adjournment!

I may be wrong—at times I fear
My soul has been embittered by
Envy of that exalted sphere
Almost impinging on the sky—
But I have thought, and dare to say,
That we might still escape perdition,
Although the House kept holiday
With never a moment's intermission.

During the short half-year or so
In which it now recruits its nerves,
The planets somehow seem to go
Along their customary curves;
The globe revolves, and even Town
(Most nearly touched by that estrangement)
Pursues its courses up and down,
Nor suffers any marked derangement.

And, could we safely leave supplies
To AUSTEN's judgment, I confess
I'd like a Bill to legalise
A sort of permanent Recess;
I know of none among them all,
Even the Code of Education,
More calculated to enthrall
The popular imagination!

O. S.

PILGRIMS AND THEIR PROGRESS.

SOME ten days or so ago, the Pilgrims gave their Second Annual Dinner to Field-Marshal Earl ROBERTS, and while entertaining a few selected friends were themselves entertained with some excellent speeches delivered by his Excellency the American Ambassador, who was at his very best, as, of course, was everybody on such a generally confraternal occasion.

The Darling of the Bench, not "of the Gods" at His Majesty's, delivered himself of some light sentences, and, casting a sly glance at the Bell of Printing House Square, expressed his unbounded pleasure at the prospect of soon being able to purchase the entire *Times* at the price of a single journey per Tuppenny Tube.

Mr. GEORGE T. WILSON made a wonderful wandering speech, strongly advocating the use of the word "However," and however he managed to repeat, with emphasis and discretion, some twenty lines of somebody else's poetry, was to all a marvel and a great delight. "However" he did it, and how every one enjoyed it, it is needless to record. Amid cheers, however, he sat down.

The sprightly Secretary, Mr. HARRY E. V. BRITAIN—name of best omen at an Anglo-American banquet—read a number of congratulatory telegrams fresh from the States, which were received with heartiest applause and chorus of "So say all of U.S.," and soon afterwards these Pilgrims of Progress became peripatetic philosophers, and sought their various temporary abiding places.

FRIENDS IN FRONT.

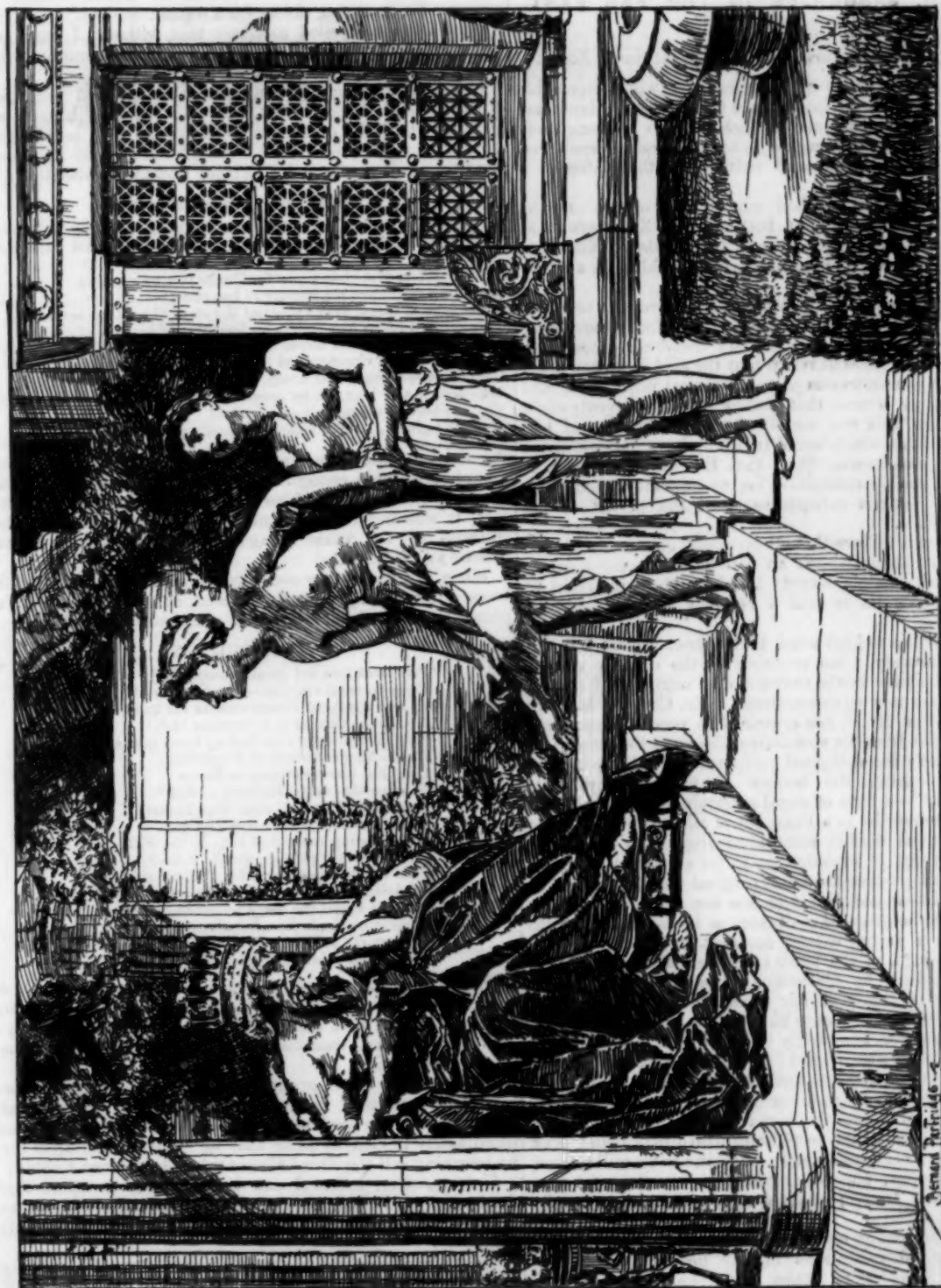
It is satisfactory to record the complete success of the CLEMENT SCOTT *Matinée* at His Majesty's, to which so many kind-hearted actors and actresses contributed some of their very best work. CHARLES WARNER was excellent. LILIAN BRAITHWAITE and GEORGE ALEXANDER, wonderfully made up, playing to perfection (which is a very high compliment to their audience), made a great hit in a short piece that ought to have a long run. *Piquante* MARIE TEMPEST sang charmingly; and Little GEORGIE GROSSMITH was immense. "Gee-Gee's" cinematograph is a most up-to-date hit, to be reckoned as among his very happiest efforts. MALCOLM WATSON's burglarious effort, illustrated by ARTHUR BOURCHIER, is not equal to Mr. BROOKFIELD's *Burglar and Judge*.

If it can ever be true that there is too little of a fine woman, then, on this occasion, it might be fairly said of JULIA NELSON, who came, sang, conquered, and vanished. Miss ADA REEVE, with two songs, was at her happiest. Mr. TREE and company revived our old friend *Herod*; and Madame RÉJANE's imitations were most amusing.

But the great hit of the afternoon's entertainment, the one thing that roused the house to an almost unexampled pitch of excitement, was the reappearance of Sir HENRY IRVING, for this occasion only, in the part of *Corporal Gregory Brewster*, which he plays as no one else can, or ever will. Such an enthusiastic greeting must have very nearly overcome even so hardy a veteran as IRVING's *Corporal Brewster*. His performance was perfection.

Alas! Poor CLEMENT SCOTT was not to enjoy for long the fruit of his friends' affection. Since the above lines were written, and just as we go to press, we learn, to our very deep sorrow, the sad news of his death.

FROM the *Daventry Express*:—"To pooh-pooh the idea of this country ever being invaded is to follow the example of the camel, which buries its head in the sand when an enemy approaches." Surely the author of this apophthegm must have meant to refer to the ostrich, which, in these circumstances, has a habit of putting his eye through a needle.



"A (COMPULSORY) VISIT TO ÆSCULAPIUS."

(Adapted, with apologies, from Sir Edward Poynter's painting in the Chantry Collection.)

Æsculapius . . . The House of Lords' Committee.

Venus (suffering from a thorn in the flesh) . . . The Chantry Fund Administration.

Attendant Nymph . . . The Royal Academy.

VENTS. "WE COURT THE FULLEST ENQUIRY."

OUR MR. JABBERJEE IN THE FAR EAST.

XI.

In same furnished diggings, at Seoul, Korea.

As a notorious epicure of horseflesh, you will, Respectable Sir, be overjoyed by the intelligence that my poor dilapidated crock, *Sho-ji*, is at last on the high road to be completely mended, though still, owing to protracted brainfeverishness, as weak as gingerbread, and reduced to the status of a confirmed soporific!

This will, perhaps, explain why I was unable—to the inexpressible disappointment both of Col. KHAKIMOW and self—to put in any appearance at the Battle of Kin-chau, which (according to Japanese authorities) resulted in a rather overwhelming Russian defeat.

But there is no medal which has not some reverse or other, and it is advisable to *audi alteram partem* before constructing a glorious Summer out of a solitary Swallow; since I am assured by Major DROSKYVITCH that the said Kin-chau affair was a simple demonstration of no strategical importance, and that, even if it is true that Russia has lost seventy-eight artillery pieces, this was merely the good riddance of bad Chinese rubbishes which would infallibly have impeded any forward movements. Also that Hon'ble KUROPATKIN is relentless in his determination on no account to commence hostilities in serious earnestness until the period of the Russian Kalends.

From which it follows that all so-called Japanese victories prior to said date can have no real significance. I do not know whether Hon'ble KUROKI has been duly informed of this, or whether he is still a resident at No. 1, Fools' Paradise!

But since it is a sickish wind that cannot wheeze hot and cold simultaneously, I am profiting by the delay to acquire greater familiarities in the customs and manners of Quaint Korea, as I am now to demonstrate. [ED. COM.—Which, we fear, means that Mr. J. has contrived to procure some more works on Korea from his circulating library at Calcutta.]

I was recently the delighted recipient of a politely-worded invite-card desiring the honour of my company at a "Poetry Party"—a form of social entertainment which I may perhaps best describe as a Feast out of all reason for flowing souls, since those bidden must, after over-eating themselves beyond the verge of repletion, go in for a competition-exam. as to who shall produce the finest original piece of poetry.

In smart Korean societies it is *bon ton* not to dress—but *per contram* to undress—for dinner, as is also customary (to at all events a partial extent) amongst upper-ten English feminines, though, in the latter case, such *décolleté* garbages cannot be dictated by gluttonous propensities, seeing that the stomachs of European fair sexes are too constricted by tight-lace for even a moderate blow-out.

Such is, however, admittedly the object of disrobing by Korean dandies, who regard it as the acme of elegant gentility for guests to gorge until within an ace of bursting.

Being myself of very so-so carnivorousness, I was literally flabbergasted to behold the voracity with which the Korean literary swell-mob did bolt incredible quantities of boiled pork with rice wine, macaronic soup, chickens with millet wine, fowl-eggs, pastries, potatoes, lilybulbs, seaweeds, roast rice, and sesame and honey puddings, as preparatories for receiving the divine afflatus!

After which writing materials were handed round—as in the post-prandial recreations of my former select fellow boarders at Porticobello House, Ledbrooke Hill—and each individual was expected, however torpid, to compose some poetical effusion upon any topic he preferred.

As a gallant, I was about to select for my theme the pulchritude of an imaginary Geisha—but was informed that

this was *ultra vires* as, in Korea, no female woman is accounted a deserving object for a sonnet.

And I am compelled to admit that, hitherto, I have not had the good luck to encounter any Korean feminine who was not abnormally plain-headed.

Our Amphictryon, a certain highly-accomplished Yang-ban of the name of HI-FA-LOO-TING, who had rendered himself so gloriously tight by dint of rice-champagne that he was the admiration of all present, did hiccough out a rather ludicrous ode to a Bamboo, of which I append *verbatim* translation:—

TO HON'BLE BAMBOO-PLANT!

"O grass with knotty joints like green shanks of a gouty grasshopper—What a multitude of useful articles and long-felt wants thou dost supply!

Thou providest first-class pipes for Company's waterworks, Also cheap furnitures for interior of bungalow.

In the form of canes, thou upholdest the steps of toddling seniles,

Or imprintest *littera humaniores* on haunches of juvenile students!

Excellent art thou when boiled in milk after the fashion of asparagus,

And, preserved in vinegar, thou makest a pre-eminently pretty pickle.

Thou containest sugar and honey, both of highly superior qualities.

But—best of all—beer can be brewed from thee on which it is possible

to become excessively intoxicated!

Glug-glug-glug! . . . Will somebody kindly pass me the bottle?"

I cannot conscientiously say that the above composition, though creditable enough as the work of an inebriate, is at all up to the standard of an English Poet-Laureate. However, it was indubitably a masterpiece compared with the effusions of the other Yang-bans—a very unimaginative prosaic lot of chaps!

When it came to my own turn, I rendered into English verse a beautifully pathetic Korean anecdote recording a phenomenal act of filial devotion. Enclosed please find:—

THE DUTIFUL SON.

"Persistent flies did gamble unappalled
Upon parental cranium—which was bald.
In vain the Aged Parent smacks his knob,
No flies he flattens to a formless blob!
This his Son notes; his feeling heart goes sore
At shocking sufferings of Progenitor.
Can filial love no stratagem devise
To clear that venerable head of flies?
He shouts 'Eureka!' also 'Hip, hussar!'
As he perceives some honey in a jar.
And, trusting sweet-stuff is to do the trick,
On his devoted pate he spreads it thick,
Then squats expectant at his Father's side,
Subduing simpers which he scarce can hide . . .
The flies desert the Sire's *jeune ca-pât*,
Finding his Son's the more alluring nut,
Who smirks sublime—while insects all round him buzz—
Circling his saintish noddle like a nimbus!"

This eloquent *impromptu*, which I recited *vivâ voce*, evoked unparagoned enthusiasm amongst the assembled Korean literary big-pots, who, hurling up their horse-hair chimney-tiles to the welkin, unanimously demanded that I was to be awarded first prize.

And—a still more gratifying circ—when, through the kind officiousness of Lady HM, a copy of the above poetical effusion was presented to the EMPEROR, his Majesty was so inordinately tickled by same that he has conferred upon my undeserving self the Third Class Order of the Rosy Rabbit!

Unfortunately, before I can be permitted to sport this decoration on bosom, it is a *sine quâ non* to shell out to Court Officials sundry fees, amounting in all to (about) yen 300.

Since any distinction bestowed on myself must inevitably be the good stroke of business for Hon'ble *Punch*, you will please attend to this matter without delay.

Or, if you will kindly remit me yen 600, it is just on the cards that I may be able to obtain a Fourth Class Rabbit for yourself as the celebrated literary character. H. B. J.

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday, June 20.

"You know, TOBY, dear boy, the trick they have of nicknaming a Ministry? Fancy my first Administration will live in history as the Tongue-tied Ministry. Odd how fortune seems to pursue me on that tack. Last Session I was wholly unable to say anything in reply to questions as to Ministerial position in respect of Don José's pleasing, agreeable, convenient plea of fiscal reform. Flatter myself I did that rather well. The air of surprised, indignant, pained regret with which I regarded a Member opposite who put the question was effective, I thought. My cue was sorrow rather than anger. Grew to be a little monotonous perhaps at end of third month. But it served its turn; carried us through Session.

"Here we are again on quite a new tack. 'Our Young Queen and our Old Constitution' was a political battle-cry sixty-seven years ago. 'Their New Tack and My Old Tactics' is my motto to-day. What they are now curious about is when ARNOLD-FORSTER will make a statement on War Office reform? As you know, thinking we 'd patched up little Cabinet difference, I named last Thursday as the happy day. Thereupon all the fat in the fire. No Cabinet secrets, even to you, dear boy. But, to tell the truth,



"THE TECHNICAL PIG."

(As reared by the Irish Board of Agriculture.)

Mr. F-r-r-l said, "These pigs were only fitted for a coursing match. They grew tall and thin, and the people were tired of feeding them."

Our artist fancies he knows another Irish pig of a lean and hungry order that the British people are rather tired of feeding—with legislation.



LABBY AND LITTLE ENGLAND.

Mr. Labouchere. "That's right, my boy! That's the way to improve your physique. If all the nation were like you we should have no more wars."

(Mr. L-b-ch-re said he was always glad to see a poor child smoking cigarettes. Not only was he preparing for himself a happy old age, but he was not likely to swell the list of the criminal classes. When carried away by his passions, instead of avenging himself on someone, he simply smoked a cigarette and it all went off.)

and I have mentioned it in the Commons, I really can't at this moment say anything on the subject.

"That quite enough for fellows opposite. Instantly off in full hue and cry. Wanting to know, you know. For all reply I say I don't know. Curious position I admit for a Premier still master of legion majority in Commons. But it can't be helped, and what can't be helped must be smiled at."

Thus PRINCE ARTHUR on the situation, which is certainly complicated. House in Committee on Budget involving colossal expenditure. But it is the lobby, the smoking-room, the Terrace, that are centres of business.

Wherever two or three are met together there is Rumour in the midst of them. All about scheme of Army Reform, recommended by Esher Committee. Report was a swingeing slap in the face

for Army administration as exemplified in Transvaal War. ARNOLD-FORSTER having succeeded BRODRICK in Pall Mall made haste to accept Report, embodying grave vote of censure on his predecessors. Time was when upon such indictment a Minister would have been haled forth and shot. Not likely that LANSDOWNE and BRODRICK will take the impeachment lying down. Have turned at bay, so Rumour aforesaid reports, and bar the progress of the proposed revolution in Army administration recommended by the Esher Report.

Someone must resign, it is said. Who? and what then? To have an occasional reconstruction of a Cabinet, say once in twelve months, may be possible. But, really, two in eight months is more than even PRINCE ARTHUR's light-heartedness can accomplish without final disaster.

On the top of turmoil comes news

from Devonport that on the heaviest poll ever taken Ministerial candidate, fighting under exceptionally favourable personal conditions, has been beaten by the biggest majority in the Borough's record. No wonder that when at midnight WINSTON CHURCHILL wanted to move to report progress in Committee on Budget Bill, PRINCE ARTHUR (in a parliamentary sense of course) nearly snapped his head off.

"The fact," he said, "that the hon. Member is desirous of speaking deliberately against his own convictions is no ground for the House adjourning at this untimely hour."

Business done.—Alarums, excursions and, incidentally, Budget Bill slowly pushed through Committee by force of closure. Nature of the alarums indicated above. Excursions made by Duke of BEDFORD with Government Whips hot foot in pursuit. Last week His Grace handed in notice of desire to call attention to Report of War Office Reconstitution Committee and ask for information.

There you are again. Information! Thirst for it is the touch of nature that makes Lords and Commons kin. Nothing could be more awkward than debate on subject at present moment. So Duke, hunted out from successive lairs, finally caught up and induced stealthily to withdraw from the premises. Accordingly, when in due course his motion was reached, lo, the Duke was not, and the inconvenient question was passed over.

What a night we are having, to be sure!

Tuesday.—Yet once more, oh ye laurels, and once more, ye myrtles brown, is brought home to us the necessity of further reform of procedure. When House resumed sitting at nine o'clock it was obvious Ministers were in a minority. Attitude of Opposition instantly changed. Through afternoon they had been painfully insistent upon thrashing out a question before going to a division. Even when patience was exhausted and closure threatened or actually invoked, they strolled forth at the leisurely pace in favour with COUSIN HUGH when he "loitered in the Lobby" in final effort to defeat the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill.

Now, eager above all things for the despatch of business, the Opposition clamour for a division. But ACLAND HOOD—on this hot summer night more vividly than ever recalling the Pink 'Un—is on guard, and the schemers opposite are defeated. Thing to do is start talk, keep it going till lingerers at distant dinner tables come back to post of duty.

In these crises FITZALAN HOPE and BANBURY are invaluable. The fact that they have nothing to say is no impediment

to speech. To-night FITZALAN HOPE, with one eye on the clock and the other on the door at which the Pink 'Un from time to time looked in and counted heads, talked for forty minutes. RICHARDS, K.C., producing imaginary brief, put in twenty minutes, in course of which he proposed alluring programme on which the Government might go to a grateful country. Free Breakfast Table; Old Age Pensions; Free Drinks.

"That'll fetch 'em," said the K.C., smacking his lips and dreamily regarding the impatient Opposition shouting for a division.



"THE PINK 'UN

"From time to time looked in and counted heads."

(Sir AL-x-nd-r ACL-nd-H-d.)

Twenty minutes past ten, and parties so evenly balanced as to make division still risky. Then the Pink 'Un brought up his reserves. BANBURY took the cake—I mean the floor. A howl of despair went up from Opposition. Ministerialists, summoned by telephone and special messengers, beginning to stream in. BANBURY safe for an hour if necessary. Ten minutes sufficed. The citadel was saved. Not for the first time in history had cackling done it.

Returning to table after division the Pink 'Un, palpitating but triumphant, announced a majority of forty-six.

But why all this trouble? Why not fill up the interval with music or a game of Bridge, or interchange of those free drinks over which RICHARDS, K.C., just now smacked anticipatory lips? Here was an hour and a half absolutely wasted. It must have sped in any case. The interval might just as well be pleasantly passed as be devoted to the

manufacture of sham speeches delivered amid persistent uproar.

Business done.—Budget Bill in Committee. An hour and a half being wasted after dinner regained by sitting after midnight.

Wednesday.—Important question suddenly sprung on House. Had CHARLES JAMES MURRAY, Member for Coventry, "beri-beri in his mind" when he handed in a motion relating to the transportation of Chinese labour to South Africa?

It was WINSTON CHURCHILL who put the question and insisted on an answer. (Perhaps it should be said that beri-beri is not a species of coffee, subject to taxation by an impecunious Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is a form of indisposition, and there was in the Member for Oldham's voice a note of commiseration as he turned upon the Member for Coventry and pressed his enquiry.) In the interests of public business it would perhaps have been better if Mr. MURRAY had, so to speak, made a clean breast of it. Brought up in the Diplomatic service, working early and late at the Foreign Office—that is to say, he arrived late and left early—sometime *attaché* at Rome, later serving his country at St. Petersburg, he is habitually prone to reticence. He sat stubbornly silent, preserving the secret whether at a particular moment he had or had not "beri-beri in his mind."

Consequences calamitous. Dr. HUTCHINSON, taking a professional interest in the case, wanted to move the adjournment in order to discuss it as a matter of urgent public importance. DEPUTY SPEAKER declined to submit proposal. HUTCHINSON waved his arms in despair. WINSTON jumped up and down on the bench in fashion which recalled gymnastic exercise of SWIFT MACNEILL. In the absence of C.-B., REDMOND *afné* took the lead of the Opposition, sternly cross-examining PRINCE ARTHUR.

Above the uproar Dr. HUTCHINSON could be heard shouting, "Twenty-four hours will make all the difference."

At this ominous remark, carrying with it the weight of professional reputation, CHARLES JAMES MURRAY was observed to go pale. Was it as bad as that? Could it be possible that within twenty-four hours there might be a vacancy at Coventry? Still he said nothing, nursing his secret with set lips, and arms folded across a manly chest in which, for all others knew, the seeds of beri-beri might at that moment be germinating.

Clamour still at height when Mr. LOWTHER, on double duty to-day, slipped out of Chair where he had presided as Deputy Speaker, seated himself at the Table and cried "Order! Order!" in his new capacity as Chairman of Ways and Means. Dr. HUTCHINSON flapped his

arms once or twice. But it was merely the impetus of earlier exertion. WINSTON CHURCHILL jumped up once more. The action also was automatic. The House, finding itself in Committee, subsided.

The Member for Coventry seized the opportunity to withdraw, carrying with him to the seclusion of the Library the secret whether, when he handed in his blocking motion, he had (or suspected he had) symptoms of "beri-beri in his mind."

Business done.—Still harping on the Budget.

CHARIVARIA.

It is at last possible to record a genuine Russian success on land. A party of Cossacks fired two volleys at some workmen at Warsaw during a riot, and killed one.

Among those who accuse the Japanese of outrages on the Russian wounded appears the name of the novelist NEMIROVITCH DANTCHENKO, whose imaginative works are deservedly popular among his countrymen.

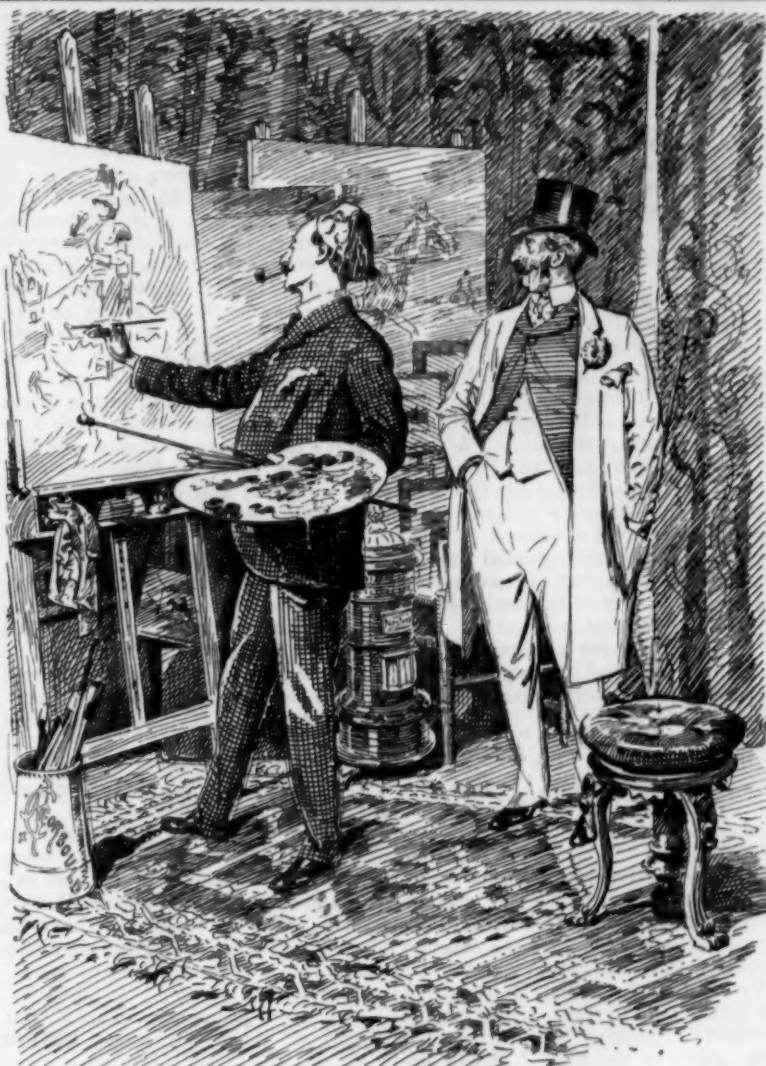
The Russians have been much encouraged by a report that in the American State of Washington a crawling army of caterpillars has done enormous damage.

Everyone was sorry for Japan when she lost two transports the other day, but we think the British Navy carried its sympathy too far when the *Sparrowhawk* promptly committed suicide on a rock at the mouth of the Yangtse Kiang.

The London Naval Volunteers, under the Hon. RUPERT GUINNESS, have now formally taken over H.M.S. *Buzzard*. They would like it to be known that they intend to take their duties seriously, in spite of the fact that the names of the ship and her commander are strongly suggestive of cakes and ale.

RAISULI, the Moroccan brigand, chose the *Daily Mail* as the means of communicating his defence to the British Public; but we understand that a packet of circulars relating to a more expensive paper has now been sent to him.

Among the prizes given by the Leicestershire Agricultural Society was one to the carter who had worked longest without returning home intoxicated while in charge of his team. Much as we dislike brag, we cannot resist pointing out that England is the only country in the world where such prizes are offered.



CANDOUR.

Artist at work. "NOW GIVE ME YOUR HONEST OPINION OF THIS PICTURE."
Visitor (who fancies himself a critic). "IT'S UTTERLY WORTHLESS!"
Artist (dreamily). "YE-E-E—BUT GIVE IT ALL THE SAME."

Disappointment is in store for any politicians who purchase *The Crossing*, by WINSTON CHURCHILL, the American Novelist, in the hope of finding an explanation why a certain distinguished M.P. of the same name went over to the other side of the House.

The SHAH's brother has fled to Turkey for protection, and the SULTAN has advised him to be a sensible fellow and return to Persia to be killed.

A train at Greenore last week dashed into the refreshment room of the local station. We understand that a serious accident was only prevented by the buns which successfully acted as buffers.

A propos of the enquiry into the administration of the Chantrey Bequest Sir E. J. Poynter has declared that the Royal Academy has always done its best to uphold the honour and position of British Art. One was hoping for its own sake that it had not done quite its best.

A by-law forbids the entry of children under eight years of age to the Wallace Gallery. It is characteristic of the Royal Academy that at that institution there is no such protection for our little ones.

JOHN TRUNDLEY, of Peckham, denies all responsibility for the recent shock of earthquake in the Midlands.

MR. PUNCH'S SYMPOSIA.

XVIII.—SHOULD CATS BE TAXED?

SCENE—Kilkenny Castle.

PRESENT:

Mr. Justice Grantham (in the Chair).
 The Editor of the "Spectator."
 The Editor of the "Lancet."
 Mr. Harry Kremnitz.
 Mr. Louis Wain.
 Mr. Plowden.
 Mr. James Caldwell, M.P.
 The Bishop of Sodor and Man.
 Mr. Jamrach.
 Mr. F. G. Kitton.

Mr. Justice Grantham. It is with great pleasure that I have acceded to the request that I should occupy the Chair on this interesting occasion. The subject is a delicate one, and needs a judicial and dispassionate mind, which, as one of His Majesty's judges, I am professionally bound to possess. I trust therefore that the distinguished gentlemen present will conduct the controversy in a manner worthy of the traditions of English fair play and moderation. For my own part I have no hesitation in saying that if I had my way I should exterminate every single cat in Great Britain and Ireland.

Editor of the "Spectator." And every married cat, too, may I ask?

Mr. Justice Grantham. I used the word "single" as an adjective of number, not of celibacy.

Editor of the "Spectator." I beg pardon. The correspondence can now cease.

Editor of the "Lancet." If I may be allowed to remind our Chairman, it is not the extermination but the taxation of cats which we are met to discuss.

Mr. Justice Grantham. Quite so. I was just coming to that. Ought cats to be taxed? Speaking then without the least animus or prejudice I should say that every cat should be taxed to the hilt.

Mr. Plowden. I agree with my brother GRANTHAM. Every cat has nine lives: why, therefore, should it not pay nine taxes?

Bishop of Sodor and Man. The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER would no doubt hail this arrangement, but as a loyal MANXMAN I should be content with the rule, one tail one tax.

Mr. James Caldwell. Representing as he does an island from which so many tales come, and all of them so far-reaching and unparalleled, I think his Lordship very moderate.

Editor of the "Spectator." I regret to note not merely the inhumanity, but the unsound fiscal bias, of the previous speakers. Nominally advocated as a means of raising revenue, the cat tax is, I believe, promoted to protect the mousetrap makers and cheesemongers.

Mr. Jamrach. The higher journalism

would not alone suffer by this nefarious proposal. If you tax cats, logic would compel you to include the whole class of felidae.

Mr. Justice Grantham. I never thought of that. Now that I come to think of it, apes, chimpanzees, gorillas and baboons ought to be taxed before cats. This is really a most perplexing subject.

Mr. Plowden. But only, I presume, when living. Brother GRANTHAM surely would not tax taxidermy? My late colleague, Lord BRAMPTON, then Mr. Justice HAWKINS (it was before he rose to fame as the uncle of Mr. ANTHONY HOPE), used always to keep his fox terrier under the Bench. I tremble to think of the subversion of justice which might result at Marylebone were I to permit a cat to occupy a similar position.

Bishop of Sodor and Man. And yet I have no doubt you could make a cat laugh.

Mr. Plowden. Not always. I remember a venturesome tabby, greatly daring, who once strolled in during a morning sitting. I tried all my best things on her without effect. I raked her fore and aft with facetiae, and she took no notice. It was subsequently I discovered that she belonged to Mr. Justice DARLING.

Mr. Jamrach. I see; her standard of humour was different.

Mr. Plowden. Precisely. But no one who does not laugh easily is encouraged to remain in my Court.

Mr. Harry Kremnitz. So far as I can understand, the conversation is being directed against cats. I came here as a delegate of the Leeds Physical Culture Society, under the impression that a tax on hats was to be discussed. Is it hats or cats?

Chorus. Cats.

Mr. Harry Kremnitz. Thank you. Then I will return to Leeds. But first I should like to say a few words about the insanitary effect of wearing hats. Hats—

Bishop of Sodor and Man. At what age would the tax begin? Would it extend to kittens?

Mr. F. G. Kitton. I have a cat named Boz, the imposition of a tax upon whom I should resist tooth and nail.

Editor of the "Spectator." Might not the tax be reserved only for cats with musical ambitions? A silent cat, a cat averse from night duty—ought not he to be immune?

Mr. Justice Grantham. The last speaker's plea does credit to his humanity. But how it would open the door to perjury! I can conceive of nothing on earth so base, so obnoxious to the august monarch of this Empire, as a cat-owner who, for the sake of saving a few paltry shillings, pronounced his pet grimalkin mute when it was vocal.

Editor of the "Spectator." Might not then a cat who figured in an article or letter in the superior weekly press be exempted from paying a tax evermore—just as jurymen on a Grand Jury are thereafter free? I cannot bear to think of all cats being treated equally.

Editor of the "Lancet." Every cat should be taxed, and that rigorously. The cat is one of the busiest of the media for conveying disease to man. It is the Carter-Paterson of microbes, the Pickford of bacilli. I never see a child fondle a cat but I see also in fancy a dozen funeral processions.

Bishop of Sodor and Man. You seem to have a cheerful mind. I should like to go to the Cat Show with you on a wet day.

Mr. Justice Grantham. What sum is the proposed impost likely to bring in?

Mr. James Caldwell. I have worked out the matter with the assistance of Sir ROBERT GIFFEN, and we find that the feline population of Great Britain and Ireland at this moment is twenty-three million. To-morrow it may be more. A poll tax of, say—

Mr. Plowden. Are pole-cats also to be taxed then?

Mr. James Caldwell. A poll tax of, say, only a shilling a year, would yield a sum of £1,150,000. No doubt the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER could do with that. But it is proposed that the tax should be higher than a shilling.

Mr. Justice Grantham. Do I understand that, if it were only high enough, it might pay off the National Debt?

Mr. James Caldwell. Certainly.

Mr. Justice Grantham. How very interesting! Then I think that in that case there cannot be two opinions, and we may consider the matter carried.

[Ezeunt.]

A FRESH START.—The French Carthusian monks, to whom all purchasers of green and yellow Chartreuse, who have not yet paid their bills, must be deeply indebted, being now disbanded, are hoping to keep up their spirits by practising a new and profitable industry. They have become automobilised as a company for the construction of electric vehicles, and will be reorganised as Motor-Carthusians. Religious and other Orders punctually attended to.

A STARTLER!—Those excellent and severely religious persons who are perpetually preaching or writing about the Millennium must have received a severe shock on seeing in the largest type the recent heading of the "Times Bargains" advertisement, which ran thus: "Before the Last Day Comes be sure that you Understand the Offer."

REAL FAIRY TALES.

THE PRODIGY AT HOME.

(With acknowledgments to the "Daily Chronicle.")

THE young Bessarabian violinist, BOLESLAS BILGER, whose capture by Carpathian *condottieri* we noted in a recent issue, is now in London, and has secured a temporary domicile in a bijou residence at Peckham Rye.

In the course of audience graciously granted to one of our representatives he stated that he might remain in London until the middle of the next week, when he is due at Potsdam.

"The KAISER," lisped young BOLESLAS, who speaks ten languages with the utmost fluidity, "takes the deepest interest in my career."

"Not only that," chimed in his singularly beautiful mother, Madame ARIADNE BILGER, "but he writes to him almost everyday in Bessarabian to know how he is getting on." Here Madame BILGER opened a richly embossed *perdoneum* and produced one of the latest letters of the KAISER to his *protégé*.

Unfortunately, at the urgent and peremptory request of Lord LANSDOWNE, we are forbidden to reprint this priceless document, which opens with the touching exordium, "From the Admiral of the Atlantic to the Apollo of the Balkans."

"Is it not kind of the KAISER to write like that?" remarked young BILGER, his lovely eyes brimming over with translucent teardrops. "He knows my life's history: that I have already eclipsed my illustrious father, ERASMUS BILGER; that I was the favourite pupil of LISZT, RUBINSTEIN, SOUBA and STEPHEN ADAMS, and subsequently studied at the Tokio Conservatoire under YAMAGATA, NODZU and Colonel OCOBO. But I hate to talk of myself."

After a brief interval the *Wunderkind* resumed, "I commenced playing in public four years ago, and have since visited Bosnia, Herzegovina, Circassia, Carlsbad, South Carolina, Llandudno, Blackpool, and Nova Zembla.

"At Constantinople I had to play before the SULTAN. I appeared in a theatre attached to the harem."

Madame BILGER here hastily interrupted: "The SULTAN would not of course permit an adult *virtuoso* to play there, but made an exception in favour of baby BOLESLAS, who could not understand the nature of his audience. The SULTAN sat in the centre, with his two youngest sons, BULBUL and KABOB, and round them sat his Majesty's wives and daughters. I learned subsequently that there were 283 wives and 214 daughters."

"Yes," added her son, "and when I broke a string, the SULTAN kindly obliged me with a bowstring of his own. Wasn't it kind of him?"

"BOLESLAS," resumed his mother,



THE INFERENCE.

Giles (who has been rendering "first aid" to wrecked motor-cyclist). "NAW, MARM, I DOAN'T THINK AN 'E BE A MARRIED MAN, 'COS 'E SAYS THIS BE THE WORST THING WOT 'AN EVER 'APPENED TO 'IM!"

"played for nearly two hours, mostly his own compositions. Afterwards several richly caparisoned djinns handed round bottles of sherbet and narghilés, of which BOLESLAS partook with avidity. The SULTAN then communicated with his Grand Vizier, who presented my son with the Order of the Yenidjé and a chest filled with gold."

"We then left the palace, and were escorted to our hotel by a squadron of *hamals* mounted on camels. Unfortunately that very night the chest of gold was stolen, and when we informed the SULTAN of our loss next day, we were officially notified that he was suffering from mumps, induced by the news of an outbreak of Kurds."

At this moment a telegram was handed to Madame BILGER containing the gratifying announcement that her son had been appointed Court violinist to the Emperor MENELIK, and our representative, not wishing to intrude further at so auspicious a moment, tactfully withdrew on all fours.

The *Liverpool Echo*, describing the triumph of M. THÉRY, winner of the Gordon-Bennett Cup, says: "He stopped before the Royal box, and M. BRASIER shook him warmly by the hand, while his wife, Carom Populo, rushed up and embraced her grimy but victorious husband." Mr. Punch does not know whether Madame THÉRY is a writer or an actress, but he strongly felicitates her on her clever choice of a *nom de guerre*.

A HORRIBLE rumour is afloat to the effect that the giants are not all extinct. But the following advertisement, culled from a horticultural journal, is reassuring, and shows that a remedy for these pests is easily obtainable:

Hardy Dwarfs, 1s. 3d.
Quick Climbers, 1s. 6d.

It should be of particular interest to growers—in a large way—of Beanstalks.

If "the law's an ass," we may at least congratulate the Bench on its new BRAY.



Fair Sitter (to exhausted photographer). "SHALL I SMILE?"

LINES TO THE BACK OF MY HEAD.

My Self's part-creature, whose eccentric shape,
Making thy lord a public raree-show,
Doth ride my hitherto unconscious nape,
Plain to all eyes save mine; to whom I owe
The consequence—more galling than a blow—
Of ribald gesture and unfettered jape
That marks our passage wheresoe'er we go;
Back of my Head, to-day I looked on thee,
And am resigned to Fate's inscrutable decree.

'Tis sad to hear the personal remark
Rising distinctly o'er the social hum;
'Tis sad to see the mirth-enkindled spark
In eyes that always brighten when we come;
Sad to be conscious of the gibing thumb,
Yet find the cause thereof profoundly dark;
To move 'mid waggish coteries, where some,
With contumelious fluttering of the lid,
Ask, "Did you ever?" or reply, "They never did!"

Oft have I cast an apprehensive glance
Into some friendly mirror standing by,
Fearing that by some tragical mischance
I might have come away without my tie;
Yet was my habit formal to the eye.
True, I am something strange of countenance,
But there are others even more awry;
My contour—there are others far more fat;
I knew not *what* those lunatics were laughing at!

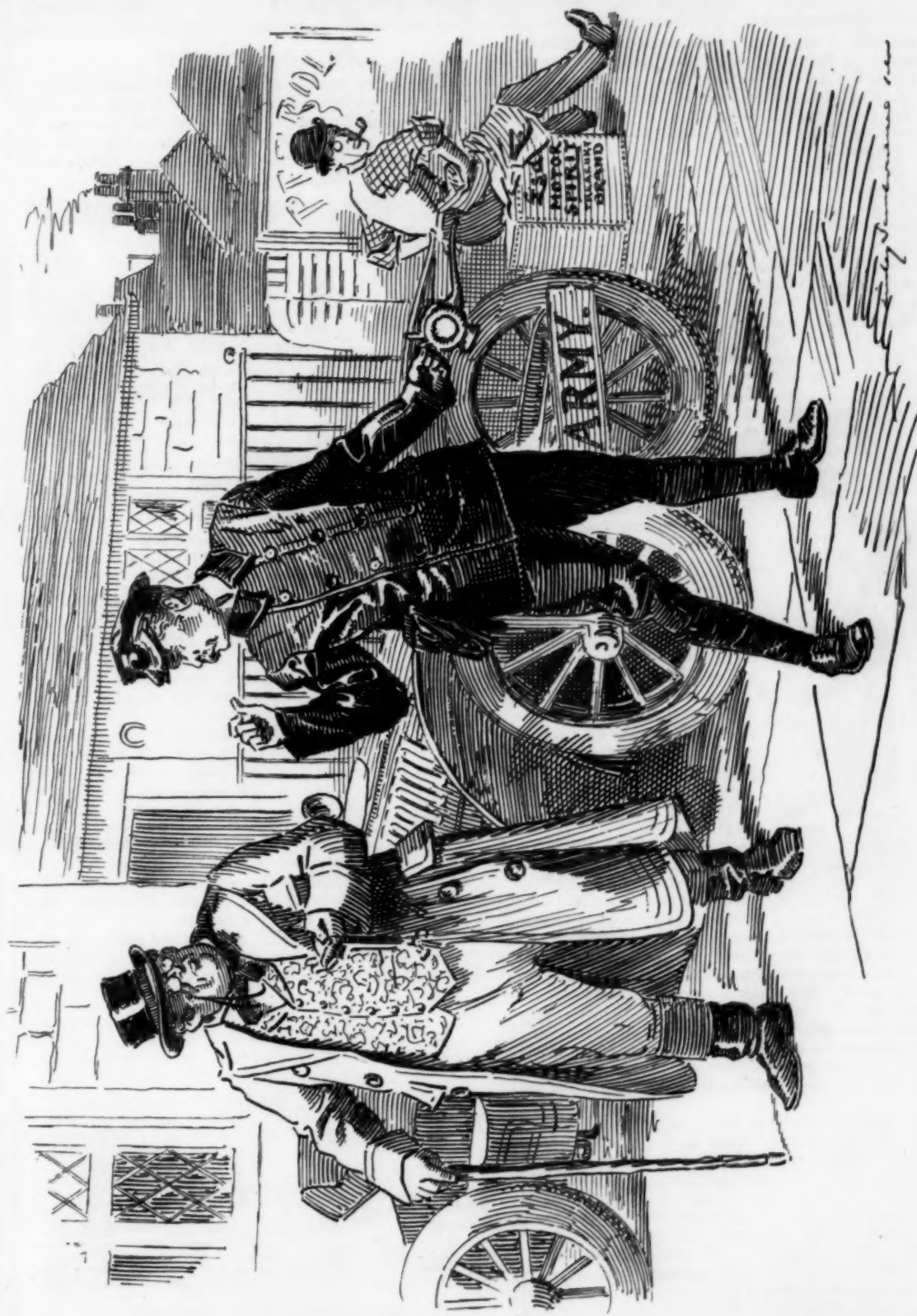
And it has been that men have called me proud,
For I have tamed my features to a stare

Of lofty tolerance, and spurned the crowd
With the unruffled camel's tranquil air
Of one superior, who doesn't care!
They knew not that my spirit cried aloud
To beg the stronger kindly to forbear;
To bid the small be careful what he said;
And, with a brave man's wrath, to punch the weakling's
head.

To-day I tarried for a fleeting space
Where my confiding tailor plies his craft;
I met my mirrored double face to face,
(How strange!) I saw him sideways and abaft!
And, for the coolness of the genial draught,
Had cast my topper from his wonted place;
And then, O clear as tho' 'twere photographed,
Thou crusher of a good man's sturdy pride,
I saw thy multiple aspect, and was petrified!

I have no will to hold thee up to scorn,
Nor power to say: No more be Head of mine!
Thou art my burden, and must needs be borne.
But I go humbly, and henceforth decline
All indoor fêtes; I shall not dance or dine;
I shall go nowhere save when hats are worn!
Nay, further,—be the blame accounted thine,
Thou Object!—lest the worshipper should scoff,
I, with extreme regret, shall take to Sunday Golf!
DUM-DUM.

CURIOUS GROUNDS FOR AN ECCLESIASTICAL INTRODUCTION.—It was stated in Court the other day that any defendant in a Divorce Case rendered himself "eligible for presentation to a Bishop!"



PENNY WISDOM.

MR. BULL. "NOW THEN, WHY DON'T YOU START?"
RIGHT HON. H. O. AEE-LD-F-BST-R (*Chauffeur*). "I'M READY ENOUGH, BUT I
CAN'T START WITHOUT PETROL, AND"—(*pointing to CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER*)—"HE'S SITTING ON IT!"

OPERATIC NOTES.

Monday, June 20.—First night of new opera by M. SAINT-SAËNS, on a very old subject entitled *Hélène*. In justice to the composer and the librettist, two single gentlemen rolled into one in the person of M. SAINT-SAËNS, it must be at once stated that this work is described in the programme as



Miss Regents-Parkina-Venus, surrounded by the pupils of her mixed educational establishment taking the air, tells Hélène-Melba that, to complete her education, she must go to Paris.

"*Poème Lyrique in Six Tableaux*," which may be regarded as a pro-grammatical translation of "*Poème Lyrique en un Acte*," as it is styled on the cover of the published book. Ergo, an opera of dramatic action was not to be expected, nor must it be criticised as such. If, from the first, Glück is recalled to us, so that we have come to look upon it as a Happy G'lucky sort of undramatic piece, it is not until the final tableau that we are forcibly reminded of OFFENBACH'S *Belle Hélène*, and then we miss the presence of Calchas, Ménélas, and many lasses and lads besides, not to mention the sparkling light music that used to set us all a-humming and made of the audience one great "Music Bee." SAINT-SAËNS' "*poème lyrique*" is a work *sans-songs*. Nor does it lend itself more readily to action than does any passage between a Wagnerian hero and heroine.

The scenery for this poem is specially remarkable for the frozen fountain in front of the Palace of Ménélas, the water of which, having reached a certain height, has struck and refused to come down again. That the "sky-borders" should materially interfere with the realistic effect of Troy town a-burning in the distance appears to everyone, artistically



"The Trippers."—No Luggage Allowed.
Dismal Operatic prospect, if likely to end in a squall.

interested, as "uncommonly hard lines." The Sky-boarders, i.e. the divinities temporarily stopping in Olympus, were, it is true, very hard on the Trojans. This by the way. The stage direction in the first scene is "*Chants et danses dans le palais*." We hear the singing, but can only take the word of the librettist for the fact of any dancing going on within the palace of our old friend King Ménélas. No doubt the two Ajaz and all our old classical friends ("*Vive Lemprière!*") are performing an hilarious cancan while Hélène is stealing out to meet that gay young dog Paris. And Hélène, Madame MELBA, not looking particularly classical, but very unhappy, does come out all alone, except for being accompanied by the orchestra, to cool her fevered brow with a stroll on the shore of the *poluphoisboio thalasses*, meaning "the briny," where she amuses herself with declamatory utterances which are of no particular interest, either musically or dramatically, to anybody.

Then Venus, Miss E. PARKINA, appears in a kind of mid-air garden, "*peuplé de Nymphes et d'Amours*" (ahem! Venus with all her Amours—except her *amour propre*), and sings charmingly. There are "visions about," and most effective, musically and dramatically, is the appearance of Mme. KIRBY LUM as Pallas up in the air and thoroughly well up in the music, who, after announcing the burning of Troy (which you can see for yourself "while you wait"), disappears.

For one moment it seemed as if these rather dull proceedings were about to be enlivened by a dance to be performed either by MELBA-Hélène or by M. DALMORES-Paris, as we certainly caught the words, sung in a tone of command by Pallas, "*Pas seul!*" But neither Paris nor Hélène was *dans le mouvement*, and on referring to the libretto we found the words were "*Paris seul*," and were addressed to Paris, advising him to go away *en garçon* and "leave the girl alone!" But when the Goddess of Wisdom has vanished, then the rather dull boy and the very fine girl embrace enthusiastically, and run out to hire a boat in which, after a delay of some few minutes absolutely necessary for setting the sail, they appear drifting away before the breeze at the rate of eighteenpence an hour (without the man), regardless of rudder, and apparently giving the slip to the proprietor, who is not on the spot to look after his own craft. Curtain. The actor-vocalists reappear some seven or eight times, but Conductor MESSENGER does not come to the front (in this sense at least), nor does the composer, M. C. SAINT-SAËNS, for whose absence Madame MELBA despairingly apologises in dumb show.

After this, "Bang goes saxpence!" that is, we have "cannons to right of them, cannons to left of them" in *La Navarraise*, which, beginning in smoke, so ends, and is all sound and fury signifying very little to anyone, and least of all to Mme. DE NUOVINA as Anita, a part to which Mme. CALVÉ contrived to give whatever of dramatic significance it is capable: but then CALVÉ herself is *capable de tout*.

Wednesday, June 22.—*Rigoletto*. Mlle. SELMA KURZ triumphantly repeating her vocal and histrionic success as Gilda needs no more than a mere KURZ-ory remark. Well and wisely does M. RENAUD, as *Rigoletto*, play the fool, and therefore he must be, as was Papa Eccles in *Caste*, "a very



View of Minerva glittering in armour, or the Crystal Pallas.



"LA NAVARRAISE."

Cannon Bal d'Opéra. Très bang. Intended to be very pop-ular.

clever man." Signorina FRASCANI is the satisfactory new comer as *Maddalena*, and Signor DANI is raised to the operatic peerage as "the New Duke." It cannot be said of Signor DANI's singing and acting that, as HENRY IRVING'S inimitable *Corporal Brewster* observes, "it wouldn't do for the Dook," as it does very well, though not by any means "a record."

Thursday, June 23.—*Habitues* arriving at the Opera House punctually, regretted the hurried cutlet and hasty pudding they had taken in order to obey the showman's usual adjuration "to be in time" for LEONCAVALLO'S delightful opera. But "the old order changeth, yielding place to new," and at the last moment *La Navarraise* preceded *Pagliacci*.

Salutations to *Pagliacci*, "by RUGGIERO LEONCAVALLO (born 1858)." Quite the *Nedda*, in appearance, as is Mlle. AURÉLIE REY, singing prettily and acting cleverly, yet we missed MELBA.

As *Tonio* Signor SCOTTI was all that could be desired, except his make-up. Unless our memory is deceitful, *Tonio*, when he first appeared at Covent Garden, used to be in a sort of Pierrot's costume, and thus attired he sang the great prologue. Without the Pierrot's dress two-thirds of the dramatic effect are lost. Clever artist as SCOTTI is, herein he has made a mistake.

M. SEVEILHAC as *Silvio* is good, but he bears not the gay plumage of the cock of the village, such as befits the gay rustic-maiden-killer, son of a superior farmer. *Silvio* is a provincial rustic masher, and M. SEVEILHAC doesn't raise him up above an ordinary gardener. But Signor CARUSO as *Canio*! His voice fills the house, nay, crowds it. The audience were enthusiastic, and indeed his singing was magnificent; but CARUSO'S *Canio*, histrionically, lacked the irresistible pathos that signalised Signor DI LUCIA'S inimitable rendering of the part. But, what a voice! what a whole court of appeal to the public it is! That CARUSO was called, and recalled, and called again after that, goes without saying, and we come away humming the Motley's melody which, strangely enough, gets somehow blended with that to which *Rigoletto* the Jester limps round the stage, while the leading motive of *Pagliacci* confuses itself with memories of the "other lips" of BALFE'S dear old *Bohemian Girl*.

IN TOPSY-TURVY LAND.

THE production of Mr. W. S. GILBERT'S most amusing study in topsy-turvydom entitled *Harlequin and the Fairy's Dilemma*, "An Original Domestic Pantomime in Two Acts," which has been running at the Garrick Theatre for the last six or seven weeks, was a decidedly happy thought on the part of Mr. ARTHUR BOURCHIER, lessee, manager, excellent comedian, and first-class professor of general utility, whose representation of the heavy-cavalry officer Colonel Sir Trevor Mauleverer is only equalled by his perfect rendering, in the same piece, of the old-fashioned traditional JOEY GRIMALDI clown. Startlingly humorous too is the transformation of the elegant Lady Angela Wealdstone, charmingly played by Miss VIOLET VANBRUGH, into the short-skirted, gracefully dancing and posturing *Columbine*.

Mr. SYDNEY VALENTINE'S characterisation of conceited Mr. Justice Whortle, "of the High Court of Judicature," who has an intense appreciation of the jokes with which he beguiles the jury, the bar, and the public, is as excellent as his impersonation of doddering dotage when compelled by magic art to appear as shaky old *Pantaloon*.

Miss JESSIE BATEMAN is delightful as the ordinary theatrical type of fairy in a pantomime, able to parrot a few lines of rhyme without regard to their meaning, and waving her wand in the conventional style. The author has made the character as muddle-headed a supernatural being as *Puck* in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The old-fashioned theatrical, tinsel-eyelided and spangled demon *Alcohol*, capably played by Mr. JERROLD ROBERTSHAW, belongs, as do both "supernaturals," only to pantomime, and they are puzzling even at that, when, in the last scene, they suddenly become mortals in order to be married in church by the Rev. Aloysius Parfitt, M.A., of St. Parabola's, which character, as portrayed by Mr. O. B. CLARENCE, is quite the most absurdly humorous performance in this extravaganza, where everything, and everybody, is so supremely ridiculous. By the way, is some subtle joke intended to be conveyed by the mispronunciation of the comic clergyman's christian name, *Aloysius*, which is pronounced by everyone, in this piece at the Garrick Theatre, as *Aloysius*? Correctly the name should be pronounced *Aloysius*. Never as "*Aloysius*." Would either "satirical rogue," author or actor (the latter an Oxford man), pronounce Heloise as *Heloye*, or Louis, monosyllabically, as *Lous*?

Mr. RICKETT'S music, Mr. JOHN D'AUBAN'S dances, and Mr. BRUCE SMITH'S scenery, all conduce to the success achieved by this mirth-provoking, topsy-turvy piece of absurdity.

It is preceded by *A Lesson in Harmony*, a light comedietta written in prose by the Poet Laureate. It is a mere curtain-raiser of a well-known type, on the model of our very old friend, *Book the Third, Chapter the First*, but without the "snap" that popularised that adaptation from the French. As one of the principal parts is played, very cleverly, by Mr. BOURCHIER, and the other, very prettily, by Miss BATEMAN, there is secured for it, from appreciative early-arrivals, an amount of attention which, probably, would not have fallen to its lot had it been written by a less favoured author.

"TO BE LET.—An attractive Detached Gentleman's Residence."—*The Standard*. [Suitable for attractive detached lady?]



BERNARD PARTRIDGE.

IT was in a corner of the County Ground that Mr. PUNCH, who had looked in for a few minutes to see how the match was progressing, came across the famous Cricketer. On the approach of the Sage the Young Athlete—the picture of health, strength, and good looks—hastily thrust into his pocket a note-book in which he had been writing. “Well,” said Mr. PUNCH, “your work for the day is over, I suppose—if it can be called work; while I—” and the Sage sighed as he thought of the Atlantean burden to be dealt with before he sought his couch.

“Come, Sir,” replied the Cricketer, “I bet you that I work harder than you do.”

“I’m open to conviction,” replied Mr. PUNCH, “but I don’t see how you can prove it.”

“Very well, then. Now listen. To-day I made 120 not out, was interviewed twice, photographed three times, and wrote half a column for the *Daily Demagogue*. I’m off now to get a bit of dinner, and before I turn in I’ve got to finish an article on the Economics of Sport for the *Statist*. If I get to bed by 12, I shall consider myself lucky.”

“Then I suppose you’ll take it out in the morning?”

“Not a bit of it. I’ve got to keep fit, and to do that one must live by rule. Out of bed at 7, a run round the Park if I’m in town, and an hour’s work before breakfast at a book I’m writing on the Psychology of Athletics. Cricket and journalism all day, a lecture at the Breakback Institute on the Imperial Solidarity of Pastime, and then I’m off by a midnight train to Manchester, where I’m playing for the next three days. If you can show a heavier time-table I should like to see it.”

Mr. PUNCH pondered for a moment. It was open to him to retort that work must be measured by quality not quantity, and that between the exertions of the journalist-athlete and his own colossal achievements there was a difference not only in degree but in kind. But he decided to waive that point and vary his attack.

“It seems to me, my young friend, that you lead a sufficiently strenuous life—early to rise, and late to bed, and filling up all your available time with literary work.”

“Yes, that’s about it,” replied the young Apollo.

“Cricketers were not always like that,” said Mr. PUNCH. “In the old days when professionals wore grey shirts, a cricketer was more afraid of a pen than a bumpy wicket. But now you are all brainy. The old charge against athletes of being brainless Philistines, ‘young barbarians all at play,’ can no longer be made good. It doesn’t fit the facts.”

“Well, I think the ‘flannelled fools’ and ‘muddled oafs’ was pitching it a bit strong.”

“Just so,” rejoined Mr. PUNCH. “The mischief of it is that the flannelled and muddled ones, so far from being fools and oafs, are on your own showing, for I don’t suppose you are an altogether exceptional case, men

capable of serving their country with their brains as well as their hands, instead of merely ministering to her amusement."

"Well, Sir, you may be right, but at any rate we work hard enough for our living."

"Yes, and that's the pity of it—all this energy and ability lavished on games, when the country is crying out for efficiency and intelligence in Commerce and the Army and Navy. You're fond of quoting poetry in your articles, so perhaps you'll allow me to adapt a familiar couplet for your benefit:—

"He strengthened his muscles, but narrowed his mind,
And to pastime gave up what was meant for mankind."

If we are heading straight for Conscription it is you who are largely to blame for it. By the way," added Mr. PUNCH, "what are your views of Conscription?"

"Oh, I don't set up to be a thinker," replied the Athlete, "but I don't fancy it would work at all. Englishmen would never stand that. They like to serve their country of their own free will."

"Now you, for example," said the Sage, "I suppose that you are a Volunteer?"

"No," said the Cricketer, "I can't say that I am. Volunteering seems to me to be very poor fun."

"But a Volunteer may be very useful when the country is in difficulties, don't you think so? They were by no means ciphers in the Boer War."

"Well, yes. I approve of Volunteering if a man has the time."

"Time!" said the Sage. "My good young friend, I am afraid that I must take you in hand a little. Has it never occurred to you that you are overdoing all these athletics, that it is time to grow up and be rather more serious? Cricket is a splendid thing; football is a splendid thing; but no healthy fine young fellow like you ought to spend the whole summer in knocking a solid ball about and the whole winter in kicking a hollow one. That is only a small part of life, and you are making it the whole. Is there no Empire to expand, no country to be defended? Are we not menaced at every turn by clever young Americans and plodding young Germans? Against their quickness and thoroughness are we to offer no resistance but fine averages? What will a long score too often made or a goal too often kicked serve you in the battle of life? An occasional game refreshes and strengthens; continuous play is sterilising. England at this moment needs thoughtful, active, patriotic sons much more than dashing cricketers. Every young man should try to do something for his country and take some interest in affairs."

"But there's no fun in such matters," replied the youth.

"No fun?" echoed the Sage. "There you are very wrong. The study of affairs can be as diverting as a Pavilion story, and far more instructive at the same time. And if you will promise me to make the attempt to think less of the games and more of the duties of the splendid young Englishman that you are, I will give you the secret of combining love of country with love of humour." And on the young man acquiescing in the compact Mr. PUNCH placed in his hands his

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